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SUBJECT: TUXTLA SUMMIT FOCUSES ON HONDURAS SITUATION

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Leaders of Costa Rica, Panama, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico, Colombia, Honduras and the Dominican Republic met July 29 in northern Costa Rica at the 11th Tuxtla Summit. The summit focused in large part on the ongoing crisis in Honduras, with all present (including Manuel Zelaya's representative Aristides Mejia) agreeing to support Oscar Arias' mediation effort and the "San Jose Accords". The 73-point "Guanacaste Agreement", which all parties signed, also touched on issues including regional security, economic development, health and migration. End Summary.

HONDURAS...

¶2. (SBU) The 11th Summit of the Mechanism for Dialogue and Cooperation of Tuxtla, designed as a forum for Central American--Mexican relations, took place July 27-29 at Hacienda Panilla in the Guanacaste province of Costa Rica. In attendance at the summit were Presidents Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, Roberto Martinelli of Panama, Mauricio Funes of El Salvador, Alvaro Colom of Guatemala, Felipe Calderon of Mexico, Vice-President Gaspar Vega of Belize, and Honduran President Manuel Zelaya's chosen representative Aristides Mejia as member country representatives; and President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia and Vice President Rafael Alburqueque of the Dominican Republic as observers.

¶3. (SBU) Though it had been planned long in advance to tackle a number of regional issues, the summit focused squarely on the ongoing constitutional crisis in Honduras. The leaders all condemned "the coup d'etat perpetrated against the Constitutional Government of the Honduran Republic and the serious harm perpetrated against its democratic institutionality and the legitimate exercise of power of its Constitutional President Jose Manuel Zelaya Rosales." The agreement called for the "re-establishment of the institutional order, through dialogue", and pledged to support "the initiative presented by Oscar Arias Sanchez, in his condition as mediator, entitled the 'San Jose Accord for National Reconciliation and Strengthening Democracy in Honduras.'" Despite local media granting him the title of "vice-president", Mejia signed the agreement as the "Representative of the Constitutional President of Honduras, Jose Manuel Zelaya Rosales."

AND EVERYTHING ELSE

¶4. (SBU) The rest of the "Guanacaste Agreement" is a veritable laundry list of points upon which the signatories already agree, covering everything from international aid to global climate change. The representatives stated their appreciation for the Merida Initiative, but called for increased U.S. financial support for security-building and anti narco-trafficking efforts in Mexico and Central America.

They also affirmed their commitment to deal with a number of issues affecting migrants (including accessibility of work and international trafficking issues), stated the importance of the international response to the spread of H1N1, and expressed their intention to place a priority on a regional highway project which has been stalled since 2001 (the Pacific Corridor of the International Network for Mesoamerican Highways).

COMMENT

¶5. (SBU) The Tuxtla summit and subsequent signing of the Guanacaste Agreement gave Arias' mediation effort another show of international support, and helped to keep the agreement alive in the public mind. This was also an opportunity for some of Latin America's 'moderate' leaders to meet without a strong Chavista presence, with Nicaragua's no-show and Zelaya's failure to attend in person. According to Embassy contacts, a number of country delegations were particularly impressed with new El Salvadorian President Mauricio Funes and his grasp on the issues at hand (in relation to his limited experience in politics and government). However, with the focus continuing to be on Honduras, we do not expect many of the other "agreements" to come out of the summit to have any immediate or lasting impact.

BRENNAN